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UNCLAS QUITO 003257

SIPDIS

STATE FOR WHA/PPC, WHA/AND, AND G/TIP

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: DECEMBER TIP UPDATE

REF: QUITO 3099

1. Summary. Ecuadorian police conducted 130 raids from November 12 to December 9 and found 28 minors who may be trafficking victims. The congressional committee reviewed the Trafficking in Persons (TIP) bill, and it has been amended and is ready for Congress' second reading. Several embassies are committed to fighting trafficking, and we will work with them to promote GOE engagement. The new Minister of Government has named an undersecretary as his ministry's POC on TIP. End Summary.

Police Conduct 130 Raids Looking for TIP Victims

2. The unit of the police dedicated to protecting children, DINAPEN, conducted an impressive 130 raids from November 12 - December 9. DINAPEN clarified that males found in these raids are not believed to be TIP victims; they are usually picked up for underage consumption of alcohol or, in a lesser number of cases, soliciting the services of sexually exploited females. Twenty-eight females were found who may be trafficking victims.

TIP Bill Ready for Congress' Second Review

3. The congressional committee reviewing trafficking legislation recently gave us the revised version Congress will debate after the holidays. (A copy was emailed to WHA/PPC and G/TIP on December 15.) The bill correctly defines the crime of TIP and raises the age of consent to 18. The penalties for traffickers range from 12 to 25 years, and criminals typically receive a more severe sentence when the victim is a minor. The ABA will travel to Ecuador in mid-January and will review anti-TIP bills.

Diplomatic Community Supports Trafficking Fight

4. Several other embassies are interested in working to encourage the GOE to fight TIP. We have spoken with the Spanish, French, Peruvian, Colombian, Belgian, and Dutch embassies between November 29 and December 9. All expressed interest in cooperating with us and the GOE to combat TIP. PolOff will contact the MFA and set up a joint meeting with the other embassies to show the importance of combating trafficking to jointly encourage GOE anti-TIP efforts.

New Advisor for TIP

5. On December 15, PolChief and PolOff met with newly-named Undersecretary of Government Eduardo Ruiz, who was designated by Government Minister Damerval to handle the TIP portfolio. We explained the differences between trafficking and alien smuggling, the USG's trafficking report and tier levels, and our impressions of the GOE's efforts to fight TIP. We encouraged Ruiz to convoke the GOE's inter-institutional anti-TIP group, which his minister heads. He pledged to do so, and said Minister Damerval was ready to lobby Congress in support of pending anti-TIP legislation.

KENNEY